

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

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R 301426Z NOV 73

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4738

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 1375

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, PGOV

SUBJ: WEST BANK REPRESENTATION AT CAIRO MEETING OF NATIONAL
PALESTINIAN ASSEMBLY

1. JERUSALEM ARABIC DAILY EL QUDS REPORTED NOV 29 THAT YASIR ARAFAT ANNOUNCED PREVIOUS DAY IN ALGIERS PLANS TO RECONVENE THE NATIONAL PALESTINIAN ASSEMBLY IN CAIRO DURING FIRST WEEK OF DECEMBER. (IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW, IF AT ALL, POSSIBLE PALESTINIAN CONFERENCE IN BEIRUT REPORTED IN NOV 30 EL QUDS MAY RELATE TO NPA MEETING.) STORY OF ARAFAT ANNOUNCEMENT FOLLOWED NOV 22 EL QUDS STORY ORIGINATING IN BEIRUT THAT PLO HAD NOMINATED FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS FROM WEST BANK AND GAZA TO PALESTINIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN A GOVERNMENT IN EXILE: ABDEL MOHSEN ABU MAIZER FROM JERUSALEM; HILMI HANNOUN, MAYOR OF TULKARM; AND ZUHAIR EL RAYYES FROM GAZA.

2. CONGEN OFFICER QUESTIONED WELL-INFORMED EL QUDS EDITOR, ABU ZALAF, ABOUT THESE REPORTS NOV 29. ABU ZALAF STATED PLO WANTED NEW FACES FROM WEST BANK TO REFURBISH IMAGE AS RESPONSIBLE, BROADLY-BASED PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATION, BUT HE PERSONALLY DOUBTED PARTICIPATION OF ABOVE-MENTIONED INDIVIDUALS. ABU ZALAF
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BELIEVES FORMER WEST BANK MEMBERS OF NPA SUCH AS FORMER SPEAKER

OF JORDANIAN PARLIAMENT AND PROMINENT NABLUS BUSINESSMAN, HIKMAT AL MASRI, WERE MORE LIKELY TO BE INVITED, WITH SOME "NEW FACES" POSSIBLY ALSO INCLUDED. HE ALSO OPINED THAT GOVERNMENT IN EXILE WOULD BE ONE RESULT OF NPA MEETING. HE CONSIDERS IT IMPORTANT THAT PALESTINIAN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP MOVE FROM HANDS OF "REVOLUTIONARIES" SUCH AS ARAFAT TO PEOPLE THAT WEST WOULD VIEW MORE FAVORABLY AND ACCORD GREATER RESPECT, AND HE BELIEVES THIS WILL IN FACT OCCUR AS RESULT OF NPA MEETING AND SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS.

3. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION HERABOUTS CONCERNING WEST BANK PARTICIPATION IN NPA. IT IS ASSUMED ISRAELIS MAY THREATEN NOT TO ALLOW PARTICIPANTS TO RETURN, THUS DISCOURAGING THEM FROM GOING. SOME OF OUR ACQUAINTANCES ARGUE THAT INFUSION OF LOCAL CITIZENS WOULD HAVE MODERATING INFLUENCE, AND THUS BE TO ISRAEL'S ADVANTAGE. WE KNOW LITTLE ABOUT MOST CANDIDATES BEING DISCUSSED, BUT UNDERSTAND THEY ARE CONSIDERED TO HOLD NATIONALISTIC BUT MODERATE POLITICAL VIEWS AND TO BE HIGHLY RESPECTED IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

DAY

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